



Department of Commerce

Director: Francine Giani

Divisions: Administration,
Division of Consumer Protection
Division of Corporations and Commercial
Code
Division of Occupational and Professional
Licensing
Division of Public Utilities
Committee of Consumer Services
Division of Real Estate
Division of Securities
Office of the Property Rights Ombudsman



Full-Time Employees: 268.5

Contact Information: <http://www.commerce.utah.gov/>
(801) 530-6646

Mission Statement: To protect the public interest by ensuring fair commercial and professional practices.

Emerging Issues and Strategic Focus:

The growing population is seeing increased activity in consumer and investment, fraud as well as unprofessional conduct in the medical and pharmacy fields. In particular, the St. George area's increasing elderly population, fraud and predatory prescription practices targeted at the elderly are increasing.



Economic Development:

- Encourage additional municipalities to join the One-Stop Business Registration
- Bring the benefits of competition and innovation in telecommunications, broadband, and other similar services to more rural areas in Utah
- Develop ways to encompass other jurisdictions in online services to facilitate interstate commerce, with the goal of a seamless worldwide business registration process without losing Utah's jurisdiction and identity
- Increase the number of professional licensees to increase the state tax base and decrease reliance on assistance programs, allowing more money to become available for educational opportunities, facilitating employment opportunities, and growing the economy
- Address concerns that the financial markets may be near or at the top of a cycle, with the potential for a significant market correction
- Support appropriate ways to increase Utah's access to clean and renewable energy
- Assist energy utilities in their planning processes to acquire the most cost-effective mix of energy resources



Quality of Life:

- Protect ratepayers who do not have competitive choices so that they receive good service quality, and maintain Utah's energy utility rates among the lowest in the nation
- Prevent fraud and ensure the honesty of the securities industry
- Maintain the integrity of the real estate market and protect against fraud and higher mortgage rates through Public Service Announcements and other educational efforts
- Improve conservation and efficiency in the use of electricity and natural gas using cost-effective strategies
- Continue to advocate for the consumer classes in policy development and utility filings before the Public Service Commission



Education:

- Help ensure that utility customers understand their rights and responsibilities, including assistance programs available to low-income consumers, and help other agencies, the Legislature, public groups, the media, and all Utahns understand future choices, consequences, and tradeoffs in energy and telecommunications issues
- Continue to seek opportunities to educate investors and entrepreneurs with a particular emphasis on senior fraud, helping new businesses avoid scams that could prevent them from succeeding, and working with the Wayne Brown Institute to educate entrepreneurs about capital raising efforts and solicitation materials
- Air public service announcements and increase distribution of brochures to educate consumers on fraud, particularly the use of checks, credit cards, and electronic banking
- Continue to make more information available online by increasing online services, and adapting to new online frauds with global victims
- Develop a new website and other educational materials to explain the ratemaking process and other key issues in the energy and telecommunications industries that impact consumers
- Refine pre-licensing and continuing education, facilitate distance education, increase standards for certifying courses, and work with the private sector to develop improved core topic courses



Governance:

- Ensure that fees and fines collected by the Department will be used appropriately to accomplish Department outcomes
- Provide a stronger presence in the St. George area to combat scams
- Continue to work with the Public Service Commission, utilities, and all other parties to ensure processes are fair, open, and transparent as possible, and understandable to the public and ratepayers
- Refine internal operations to provide the best balance between investor protections and the elimination of unnecessary burdens on regulated entities
- Regularly evaluate potential new regulation or elimination of programs
- Provide regulatory functions in a timely, accurate, and accessible manner
- Develop and implement a licensure/enforcement database that maximizes access and retrieval of enforcement records and user-friendly public access